



THE MORNING NEWS

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Requests for new permits reduced by 40 to 60%



ORANJESTAD -- As a result of a new and structured cooperation between the Department of Labor (DAO) and the Department of Immigration (Dimas), there is a significant reduction of the number of work/resident permits being offered for the first time. Both Departments also have concrete agreements regarding the LTU law stipulations. For example, when DAO gives a negative advice for a particular work permit, that advice or decision becomes binding for DIMAS as well.

Since last year they began a very stringent process which resulted in a considerable reduction in the amount of first time work permits. This also caused a significant reduction in the number of positive decisions which previously was very easy to obtain.

Today, every effort is being utilized to put as many people as possible to work, according to Minister Otmar Oduber.

The Minister flatly refuted the false information in certain media which claims that the government has issued a certain amount of permits to

Venezuelan workers to work at the Valero Aruba Refinery. The Minister emphatically denies any such information; Oduber said this is simply not true. According to Oduber DPL and DIMAS are completely synchronized and follow specific guidelines.

He further stated that... "I can guarantee our community that there are almost no permits being issued at the moment, that is, first time work permits or advice for same at DIMAS. The few that are being processed are for very limited time periods and for specific short term projects where it has been proven that there were absolutely no local persons available for the job."

The Minister reported on some court cases of foreign companies who won a bid for some work on the island and who thought that they could employ foreign workers to do the work, but were denied work permits for these foreign workers.

Otmar Oduber stated that winning a bid for work in Aruba as a foreign company is no automatic license for employing foreign workers.

Foreign workers could receive a work permit only after careful evaluation of the employment market on the island and where it can be proven that local employees are not available. Only then will they consider the possibility for issuing work permits for short durations for a specific project.

US stocks end losing streak

NEW YORK (AFP) - US stocks closed higher yesterday, as the Dow Jones Industrial Average ended an eight-day losing streak and markets regained some ground lost during Tuesday's brutal sell-off.

The Dow average of 30 blue-chip stocks rose 29.36 points (0.25 percent) to stand at 11,895.98 in closing trade.

The broader S&P 500 climbed 6.38 points (0.51 percent) to 1,260.43, while the tech-heavy Nasdaq Composite rallied 24.35 points (0.91 percent) to stand at 2,693.59.

Government a good example of the application of the law on Breastfeeding

For years mothers of nursing babies had to forfeit breastfeeding their infants in order to return to work. Many chose to stop breastfeeding much sooner than desired simply because they had to go back to work. There was no law providing for an opportunity to return to work without interrupting the all-important breastfeeding phase of their infants.

Gradually the government brought a change in this situation, however, for some reason or other the law regarding breastfeeding was not being interpreted correctly, or in a manner conducive to mothers of infants.

Just recently, Minister Michelle Winklaar-Hooyboer ratified this law in the Council of Ministers so that the government could clarify the law in view of our actual local social situation. Another objective of the Minister of Social Affairs was to promote breastfeeding for the benefit of nursing children.

Aruba now has a law which provides very clear and explicit well structured rules for employees as well as for employers. These rules should result in win-win situations for both employee and employer which in essence should ultimately benefit the health and formation of young nursing children.

The Minister of Social Affairs wishes to inform all public servants of the existence of the Breastfeeding Law which entails breastfeeding infants on the job. She hopes to ensure that no department gets the wrong interpretation of the law. The



government wants to be certain that they are a good example of the application of this law.

The following is the law which pertains to public servants (ambtenaar) of whom all have identical status. Article 1614cb of the Citizens Law Canon says that female employees during the first 9 months of the life of their baby may interrupt their work whenever they need to and for as long as they need to breastfeed or "pump" their breast in all tranquility without losing the right of their usual breaks and without incurring any negative influence on their salaries. The female employee, however, must comply with three conditions:

1. she must inform her employer of her intent;
2. the job interruption may not exceed one quarter of her workday;
3. she must consult with her employer concerning the moment and duration of her job interruptions.

Continued on page 5

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TUESDAY AND FRIDAY: LIVE MUSIC

US charges 72 over 'nightmare' child porn network

WASHINGTON (AFP) - US officials Wednesday unveiled charges against 72 people in their largest global probe into Internet child pornography which smashed a "nightmare" online bulletin board catering to pedophiles.

The investigation launched in 2009 has led to arrests in the US and 13 other countries of participants in Dreamboard, which had a "VIP" ranking system for members trading in graphic images and videos of adults molesting children age 12 and under, often violently, the Justice Department said.

"Dreamboard's creators and members lived all over the world -- but they allegedly were united by a disturbing belief that the sexual abuse of children is proper conduct that should not be criminalized," Attorney General Eric Holder said.

The ongoing probe has led

to the arrest of 52 people in the US and 13 other countries -- Canada, Denmark, Ecuador, France, Germany, Hungary, Kenya, the Netherlands, the Philippines, Qatar, Serbia, Sweden and Switzerland.

Thirteen of the 52 individuals arrested have pleaded guilty, and 20 of the 72 individuals charged "remain at large and are known only by their online identities," a Justice Department statement said.

Operation Delego "represents the largest prosecution to date in the United States of individuals who participated in an online bulletin board conceived and operated for the sole purpose of promoting child sexual abuse, disseminating child pornography and evading law enforcement," it said.

"Dreamboard was a self-described global 'community' of pedophiles dedicated to the relentless victimization and exploitation of children 12 and under," said Assistant Attorney General Lanny Breuer.

According to the Justice Department, membership was tightly controlled by the site's

administrators, who required prospective members to upload child pornography when applying for membership.

Members were then required continually to upload images of child sexual abuse in order to keep up their membership in the board, which included rules of conduct printed in English, Russian, Japanese and Spanish.

Some of the children featured in the images and videos were just babies, said Holder.

According to court documents, members employed a variety of methods to conceal their activities, using "screen names" and proxy servers, which can be used to reroute web traffic and disguise a user's actual location.

Dreamboard members also encouraged the use of encryption programs on their computers, which password-protect computer files to prevent law enforcement from accessing them in the event of a court-authorized search.

Officials said the charges and arrests were conducted in three separate phases over the course of the operation.



CAIRO (AFP) - In this image taken from Egyptian State television on August 3, 2011, Egyptian former president Hosni Mubarak holds the microphone as he pleads not guilty on the first day proceeding at the court set up in the Cairo Police Academy on the outskirts of the capital. Mubarak and his two sons pleaded "not guilty" to charges of murder and corruption, in the historic trial. The hearing has gripped the nation, and Cairo's usually bustling streets were abnormally quiet during the proceedings. More than 1,000 police and soldiers secured the complex and vetted some 600 lawyers and journalists.

France to extradite Noriega to Panama

PARIS (AFP) - Panama's ex-strongman Manuel Noriega looked set Wednesday to finally return home -- and go straight into custody there -- after more than two decades in foreign prisons, as France ordered his extradition.

The pock-marked 77-year-old general nicknamed "Pineapple Face," deposed by US troops who invaded Panama in 1989 to put an end to his drug-running activities, could be back in his native land as early as next month.

In Panama, officials said everything was ready for Noriega to be jailed on his re-

turn, after what his defence lawyer in the country, Julio Berrios, called a "tough battle" to fight extradition.

He has three convictions for gruesome human rights violations, including the death of a military commander, dating to his military rule from 1983 to 1989. Each conviction carries a 20-year prison sentence.

The one-time strongman was a key asset for the US Central Intelligence Agency but fell out with Washington when he allegedly turned his strategically important country into a drugs hub.

UK police seize record £300mn cocaine haul

LONDON (AFP) - Police have seized Britain's largest ever cocaine haul, worth up to £300 million, from a luxury yacht which had sailed from the Caribbean, officials said Wednesday. The 1.2-tonne stash was found hidden under the bathing deck of the pleasure cruiser docked in the port of Southampton in southeast England.

In dawn raids Dutch police, acting on intelligence from British and French authorities, arrested six men suspected to be involved in an international drugs ring responsible for the shipment.

Officials said it was the

largest haul of Class A drugs - classified as those most likely to cause harm -- ever found in Britain.

Authorities were alerted to suspicions over the yacht, named Louise, while it was in the British Virgin Islands in the Caribbean in May.

The boat was then intercepted in Southampton in June on its way to the Netherlands.

The drugs, estimated to be worth £50 million wholesale but with a street value of up to £300 million, were found in a specially designed compartment after a six-day search of the 20-metre cruiser.

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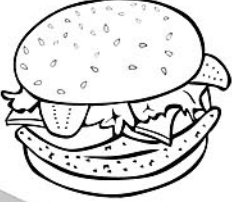
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End of Vacation Reading Program at Aruba National Library



ORANJESTAD – The Aruba National Library, after a month, closed its Vacation Reading Program last Thursday, July 28, with a presentation by two noted storytellers, Vanessa Boekhoudt and Merlynne Williams.

Vanessa who works in the book mobile, narrated a story of Roswitha Wiedijk - "Prinses Pien wil een hond" (Princess Pien wants a dog,) which everyone thoroughly enjoyed.

Merlynne Williams followed with "Magy Maripampun," from the book written by her mother Mercedes Petrochi and "Magy Maripampun 2" deploying her laptop to illustrate the story in a most entertaining and modern fashion.

At the end of the presentation, all youngsters received a gift and a gift certificate, thanks to the financial support of Kiwanis Club of Palm

Beach, which has been sponsoring this event for two years.

A heartfelt 'thank you' also goes to Burger King management for contributing the kids meal certificates, bringing more smiles to young faces, and to UNOCA, which contributed the venue and gave every child a copy of the book "Magy Maripampun 2" as a gift, to encourage them to continue reading.

The program was conducted by Aruba National Library personnel: Catarina Maduro and Mirla v/der Linden of the San Nicolas branch and Janine Bislik, Astrid Gietel and Lil de Freytas of the Oranjestad branch who, under the guidance of Olivia Figaroa, succeeded in making it a complete success.

A special "thank you" goes also to Kiwanis of Palm Beach volunteers - Jubi Toppenberg, Boy Ecury and Jur-



gen Benschop, who embraced the program and sponsored it

with great enthusiasm
 Thank you to Burger King

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Aruba Scholarship Foundation presents recipients for 2011-2012



Maylin Dijkhoff gets her check from new board member Thais Nierop Kappel

The board members and volunteers of the Aruba Scholarship Foundation, ASF, which is dedicated to assisting Aruban students wishing to study abroad in nations other than Holland, hosted their annual check distribution on Tuesday afternoon, August 2, in the conference room of Garage Cordia, the Toyota distributorship, in Camacuri.

ASF President Clyde Harms was joined by board

members Eric d'Arnault, Etley F.R. Lasten, Hans Schnog, Jan van Nes, Enrique E. de Cuba and new members Brian Marchena and Thais Nierop-Kappel in presenting the scholarship checks to the deserving young Arubans who will be continuing their education in Florida over the coming year. Board members Faride Tjon Ajong and Jan van Ness were off island for the event.



Hillyann Croes and proud papa Hillward

This year, 4 young ladies out of 15 applicants fulfilled the requirements to earn a scholarship. Clyde Harms explained they would have awarded more, but ASF was able to get a large number of graduates into university under the cooperative Latin American/Caribbean Scholarship program (LAC.). Aruban students attending the University of Central Florida receive a 70% discount on tuition as



Vanessa gets her check from new board member Brian Marchena

they are charged the same tuition students who are residents of the state of Florida, once they have been accepted to the school, which substantially reduces the costs of education. This year's scholarship recipients will be attending schools in Florida other than UCF.

Scholarship winners are Vanessa Fong Chu and Maylin Dijkhoff, both in their sophomore year at Miami-

Dade College pursuing Business degrees and repeat recipients. Hillyann Leanni Croes will be off to Valencia Community College in January to commence studies in Economics; Margret Carla Flores is at Valencia taking summer courses in her major of General Education and Nursing, so could not be present to receive her check from ASF and sign her contract.

Continued on page 5

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Government a good example...

Continued from page 1



The employer (the government) of the nursing mother must be afforded the opportunity to breastfeed her infant wherever she desires to do this. The employer cannot oblige the mother to breast-feed or "pump" her breast at some enclosed area designated by the employer for this purpose on the job. That designated space should be seen only as a potential alternative for the mother. On the other hand, the employer is obliged to make such a space available if this is indicated by the mother as a required necessity.

The Minister hopes that this explanation and clarification settles the issue for all heads of government departments. It is imperative, according to the Minister, that all nursing mothers enjoy the same benefits and rights, no matter what department they're employed

Aruba Scholarship Foundation presents ...

Continued from page 4



ASF Board members and this year's scholarship winners in middle

These contracts state that the students must maintain at least a "B" (3.0) grade point average, and will return to Aruba to apply the skills they

have learned, for at least a time equivalent to their studies that were financed by the ASF.

Clyde Harms explained

that the ASF program, which excludes financing for students attending university in Holland, is to "encourage diversity in the island youth in



Vanessa Fong Chu and proud parents

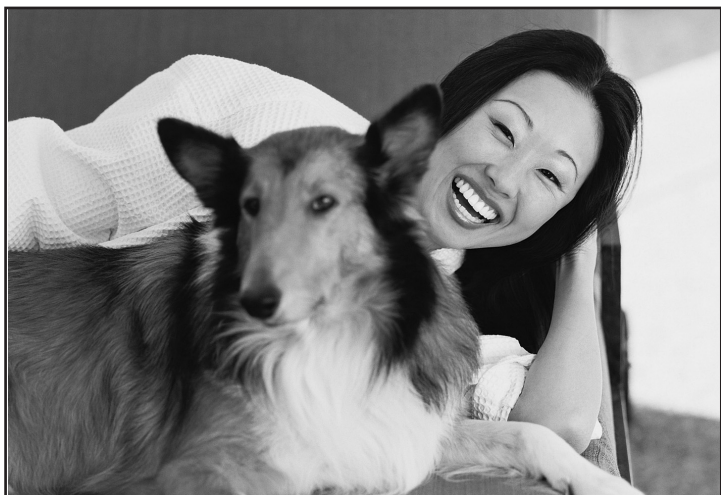
their experience and knowledge of the world." They have, in the past, awarded scholarships to students attending schools in Latin America and Europe. Florida is a popular education destination for Aruban youth and their parents as it is one of the

most easily accessible places offering numerous quality institutions of higher learning. ASF is funded strictly through contributions from private business, professional institutions and fundraising efforts.

by Rosalie Klein

Sci-Tech

US study questions if pets make owners healthier



WASHINGTON (AFP) - Pet owners have long been encouraged to think that they are happier, healthier and live longer than people without pets, but a new US study claims they might be barking up the wrong tree.

Howard Herzog, a professor of psychology at Western

Carolina University, says studies conducted in the past to determine whether having a pet improves health and longevity have "produced a mishmash of conflicting results."

"While pets are undoubtedly good for some people, there is presently insufficient

evidence to support the contention that pet owners are healthier or happier or that they live longer" than people without pets, Herzog wrote in the August issue of *Current Directions in Psychological Science*.

"While some researchers have reported that positive effects accrue from interacting with animals, others have found that the health and happiness of pet owners is no better, and in some cases worse, than that of non-pet owners."

Herzog cites several studies purportedly showing the benefits of having a pet, including one from 1980 which showed that heart attack victims who had a pet were around four times more likely than petless victims to survive for a year after the crisis, but said more gloomy studies had been ignored.

"While the media abounds with stories extolling the health benefits of pets, studies in which pet ownership has been found to have no impact or even negative effects on human physical or mental health rarely make headlines," he said.

He cited another study which found no difference in blood pressure between older pet-owners and the petless. In fact, the pet owners in that study exercised less than the non-owners and were more likely to be overweight.

The professor, a pet owner himself, stressed he was not condemning pet ownership or the use of therapy animals for children with autism or people with psychological disorders, but wanted to see more scientific research done.

Facebook founder's sister leaves to start own firm

(AFP)--Randi Zuckerberg, the sister of Facebook co-founder Mark Zuckerberg and the director of marketing for the social network, is leaving to start her own company, Facebook said Wednesday.

"We can confirm Randi has decided to leave Facebook to start her own company," a Facebook spokesman said. "We are all grateful for her important service."

Technology blog All Things Digital said Zuckerberg was leaving to start a "new media firm to help companies become more so-

cial" called "RtoZ Media."

In her resignation letter, obtained by All Things Digital, she said she has spent the past six years at Facebook "innovating and pushing the media industry forward by introducing new concepts."

"We have made incredible progress, but there is still much to be done and other ways I can affect change," she continued.

"Now is the perfect time for me to move outside of Facebook to build a company focused on the exciting trends underway in the media industry."

Green tip



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European telescope detects oxygen in space

WASHINGTON (AFP) - The European Space Agency's Herschel telescope has found the first confirmed evidence of oxygen molecules in space, according to a report published this week in the *Astrophysical Journal*.

The traces, which have long eluded astronomers, were found in the star-forming region of the Orion constellation.

"Oxygen gas was discovered in the 1770s, but it's taken us more than 230 years to finally say with certainty that this very simple molecule exists in space," said Paul Goldsmith, NASA's Herschel project scientist at

the agency's Jet Propulsion Laboratory in California.

Astronomers say the oxygen is contained in ice that covers the surface of tiny dust granules, which release water and oxygen when warmed.

"This explains where some of the oxygen might be hiding," said Goldsmith. "But we didn't find large amounts of it, and still don't understand what is so special about the spots where we find it. The universe still holds many secrets."

NASA provided some of the technology to support science instruments on the Herschel telescope, which was launched in 2009.

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Hurricane Eugene strengthens to category four



MIAMI (AFP) - Hurricane Eugene gathered strength in the Pacific on Wednesday, reaching category four intensity, even though it was destined to remain far from the coasts of the Mexico, the National Hurricane Center said.

It had maximum sustained winds of 140 miles (220 kilo-

meters) per hour and was moving west-northwest at 14 miles (22 kilometers) per hour with the center about 595 miles (960 kilometers) southwest of the southern tip of the Baja California peninsula, according to the NHC.

The force of the winds made Eugene a powerful category four hurricane on the five-point Saffir-Simpson scale. The Miami-based center said the storm was expected to continue its current motion over the next several days.

No coastal watches or warnings were in effect, and forecasters said Eugene was expected to weaken beginning Thursday as it moves over increasingly colder waters. There were also no hazards currently to land.

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Health & Living

Suicide, mental health linked to sex abuse: study

SYDNEY (AFP) - Women who have experienced rape or other abuse have far higher rates of mental disorders and are up to 20 times more likely to attempt suicide than other females, an Australian study showed.

"Based on other studies, we expected there to be a correlation and an association, but the strength of it was particularly concerning," said Rees, from the School of Psychiatry at the University of New South Wales. "Not only was there a higher rate (of mental disorder) but there was also a greater severity."

Researchers analysed the results of a national survey of 4,451 women aged 16 to 85 conducted by the Australian Bureau of Statistics in 2007.

They looked at the four

more common types of abuse -- physical violence by an intimate partner, rape, other sexual assault and stalking -- and the rate of mental disorders such as anxiety and depression, and substance abuse.

"For women exposed to two types of gender-based violence the lifetime rate of mental disorder was 69 percent and for three or more types of gender-based violence, it was 89.4 percent," Rees said.

Attempted suicide figures were alarming with a 1.6 percent attempted suicide rate for women never exposed to gender-based violence rising to six percent for women who had experienced one type and 34 percent for those enduring three or four types.

The data, which showed about 15 percent of Australian women had reported sexual assault of some sort and eight percent had reported being raped, was comparable with other countries, she added.

"Gender-based violence is considered a human rights violation against women," she told AFP.

"We really did the research to find out: is there anything that's working to address this? And if so, what is it?"

"There's not enough information out there about the effectiveness of programmes and intervention. For all of us, we should be looking globally at trying to address this."

HIV 'epidemic emerging in Middle East'

DUBAI (AFP) -The AIDS virus is spreading like an epidemic in some Middle East and North African countries because of homosexual encounters between men, a study warned on Wednesday.

"This systematic review and data synthesis indicate that HIV epidemics appear to be emerging among MSM (men who have sex with men) in at least a few MENA countries," said a study published in PLoS Medicine.

The study, titled "Are HIV Epidemics among Men Who Have Sex with Men Emerging in the Middle East and North Africa?", warned that the levels "could already be in a concentrated state among several MSM groups."

It showed that the rates of HIV infection among MSM in some countries have exceeded the five percent threshold which defines concentrated epidemics, namely

in Egypt, Sudan and Tunisia.

The study put the rates of HIV infection among MSM in Egypt's main cities of Cairo and Alexandria at 5.7 percent and 5.9 percent respectively, while the rate among receptive MSM in Sudan's capital reached 9.3 percent.

Tunisia's total rate was put at 4.9 percent, ranging between 0.8 and 6.3 percent in three regions.

"There is an urgent need to expand HIV surveillance and access to HIV testing, prevention, and treatment services in a rapidly narrowing window of opportunity to prevent the worst of HIV transmission among MSM in the Middle East and North Africa," the study said.

"Prevention of male-to-male HIV transmission must be set as a top priority for HIV/AIDS strategies in MENA," it added.

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****Other Benefits:** Lycopene is found to be effective in preventing cancer, prostrate growth and repair damaged tissues. Water melon seeds are rich in good fats and proteins. Water melons also contain phytonutrients which have very good effect on the health and proper functioning of internal organs, eyes, secretion system etc.

good amount of Potassium and magnesium, present in water melons, are very good in bringing down the blood pressure.

****Prevent Heat Stroke:** Water melon is effective in reducing your body temperature and blood pressure.

****Diabetes:** Diabetes patients, who are supposed to have low energy and low sugar diet, often complaint about starving since they don't get to eat their staple diet to their full, giving them a feeling of keeping half fed.



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New business partnership between BACARDI and Tropical Bottling Co.

BACARDI, the largest privately owned spirits company in the world, announced a new distribution agreement with Tropical Bottling Co. in Aruba. This agreement represents an outstanding growth opportunity for BACARDI and its full product portfolio, which will benefit from Tropical Bottling Company's strong distribution reach throughout the island.

Tropical Bottling Company has a widespread experience in the local market as the producer and distributor of Balashi, Balashi Chill, and a number of other soft drinks. Additionally, the company's role as the official Coca-Cola distributor in Aruba gives both companies formidable strength due to the close relationship between BACARDI and Coca-Cola during the last 100 years. "We feel proud of our new home in Aruba and we are certain that together we will reach our business objectives, but we are especially confident that we will make our full product catalogue more available to consumers in Aruba", said Edgar Martinez, Caribbean Sales Manager.

BACARDI, the world's most awarded rum, has maintained its position as the number one rum brand in the world for more than a century. Its rums, distilled more than three times and aged, mixed, and filtered more than five times, define the premium quality category of rums. BACARDI's product portfolio also includes: GREY GOOSE vodka, the world's best tasting vodka; DEWAR'S White Label, the leading Scotch whisky in the United States; BOMBAY SAPPHIRE Distilled London Dry Gin, the fastest growing gin worldwide, and MARTINI vermouth, world-leader in its class, among many other exceptional spirits.

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PICKLES



MOMMA



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ACROSS

1. Actress Dalton
5. Close friend
9. "The Office" receptionist
12. Certain fungus
13. Finish last
14. Red ___ beet (2 wds.)
15. Invigorated
17. Coffee cup lip
18. Cat's complaint
19. Country's ___ Ridge Boys
20. Belittle

22. "___ Quixote"

23. Wearing clothes
24. Received applause
27. Writer Caldwell
30. Scrooge's words
31. Indefinite amount
32. Egyptian goddess
33. Salary
35. Genuflected
36. Coal weights
37. Standard (abbr.)
38. Look after (2 wds.)
40. Above, in verse
41. Partner of "to"
44. Overhead

trains

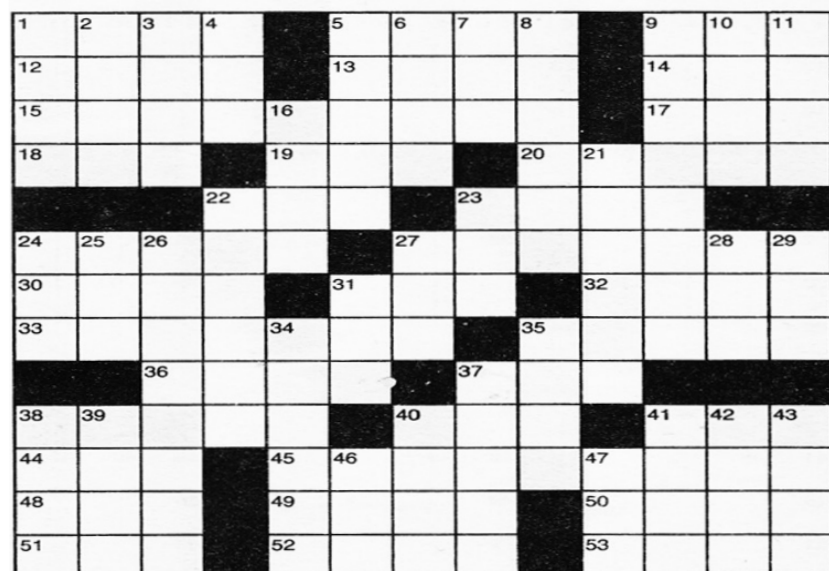
45. In the way
48. Boxing term (abbr.)
49. Weirdo
50. Artist Salvador
51. Bewitch
52. Ponderosa son
53. Rathskeller offerings

DOWN

1. ___ radio (hyph.)
2. Uninteresting one
3. Played the trumpet
4. Cloth measurements (abbr.)
5. Squeaky-___

6. Toot the horn

7. Employment
8. Awards
9. Heaven
10. Terms of a sale (2 wds.)
11. "Auntie ___"
16. Jacket attachment
21. Making cookies
22. Tyrant
23. Wail
24. Air-rifle ammo
25. Quaker grain
26. Chicago nine (2 wds.)
27. Stop
28. None whatsoever
29. New York time (abbr.)
31. Question's opposite (abbr.)
34. Sufficient
35. Deborah or Jean
37. Smells horrible
38. Clockmaker Thomas
39. Actress Sommer
40. Some poems
41. Young colt
42. Acting part
43. Elevator pioneer
46. Recent (prefix)
47. Drug-regulating org.



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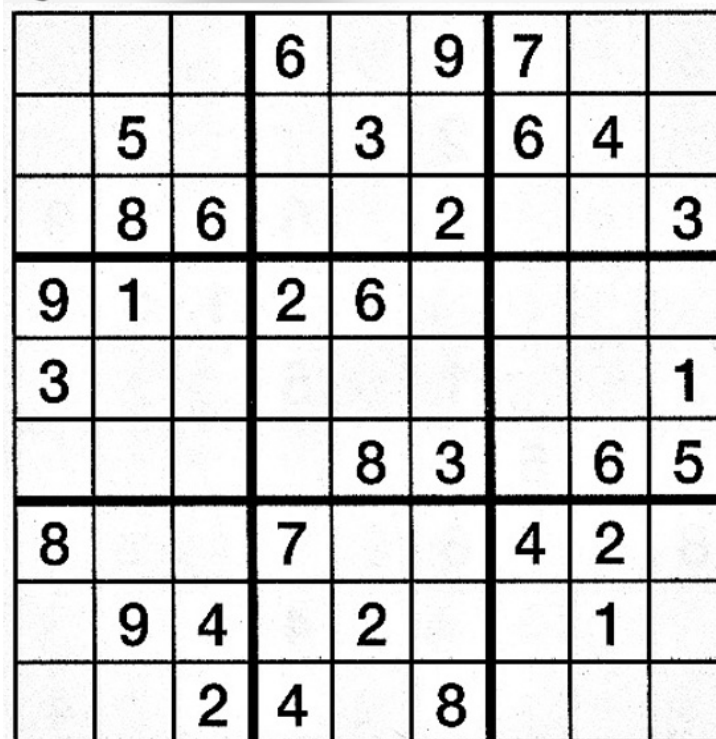
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SOLUTION

6	8	9	8	1	7	2	7	9
7	1	8	9	2	8	7	6	9
9	2	7	9	6	7	1	8	8
9	9	6	8	8	1	7	7	2
1	7	7	9	6	8	9	8	8
7	8	8	7	9	2	9	7	6
8	6	1	2	7	9	9	8	7
7	2	4	9	1	8	8	6	9
8	9	7	6	7	9	8	2	1

Complete the grid so that every row and every column contains the numbers 1 through 9
A number is Never repeated in a row or column.
In addition every rectangle must contain the numbers 1 through 9



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Finance

US AAA rating still under threat

WASHINGTON (AFP) - The United States could still face an unprecedented downgrade of its triple-A credit rating, despite the government's last minute moves to avoid defaulting on its debt.

But even if powerful raters Standard & Poor's, Moody's and Fitch decide that Washington's growing deficit and debt are too big to merit their top grade, markets might not pay much attention.

As expected, Moody's and Fitch both reaffirmed their AAA rating of US debt shortly after President Barack Obama signed Tuesday the bill that raised the country's borrowing ceiling -- without which the Treasury would have had to begin sharp spending cuts, and possibly default on debt payments.

But both warned they were still studying the legislation's deficit-cutting measures to see if they were adequate.

Moody's attached a "negative outlook" to its rating, warning that it still needs to see whether the country will actually pursue the \$2.4 trillion in deficit cuts over 10 years as stipulated, and whether the economy remains strong enough to merit a AAA rating.

S&P remained mum. On July 14, it warned of the 50-50 possibility of a downgrade within three months, even if the debt default threat was eliminated, because of the country's dark long-term fiscal profile.

S&P officials said that a \$4 trillion deficit reduction pack-

age would likely suffice to prevent a downgrade. By that measure, the legislation does not come close.

The United States has held its AAA rating since 1917, and because the dollar and US Treasury bonds are so central to world trade and finance, a

downgrade theoretically could rock the global economy.

Nick Gartside, chief investment officer for global fixed income at JP Morgan, expects a downgrade because Washington's debt and deficit profile is "a huge anomaly" in the club of AAA countries.

Oil prices strike one-month lows on poor US data

NEW YORK (AFP) - Oil prices dived on Wednesday to one-month lows on the back of more weak data in key crude consumer the United States and tumbling European stock markets.

New York's main contract, light sweet crude for delivery in September, dived to \$91.22 a barrel, a level last seen at the end of June, before pulling back to \$91.93, down \$1.86 from Tuesday.

Brent North Sea crude for September delivery slumped to \$113.23 per barrel, down \$3.23 from Tuesday's closing level.

More poor-to-middling data released Wednesday -- on slow private sector jobs creation and stalling growth in

the service sector -- darkened views of the prospects for the US economy in the coming months.

Separately, the Department of Energy announced that American crude reserves rose by 1.0 million barrels in the week ending July 29. Market expectations had been for a larger increase.

But gasoline stocks jumped more than expected.

Phil Flynn of PFG Best said US fuel consumption data is showing a steady downturn.

"While the data may not say that we are officially in a recession, the markets and components like gasoline demand say that we are already in one," Flynn said.

China has 'confidence' in the euro despite crisis

BEIJING (AFP) - China said Wednesday it remained confident in the euro despite the deepening debt crisis and considered the European financial market as one of its "primary investment destinations".

The comments by foreign minister Yang Jiechi came after Beijing signalled it would further diversify its massive foreign exchange holdings away from the dollar after the US government pushed through a deal to borrow more money.

Central bank governor Zhou Xiaochuan delivered a more measured statement and welcomed the deal, but indicated China would further diversify its holdings away from the greenback.

China, sitting on the

world's biggest foreign exchange reserves of around \$3.2 trillion as of the end of June, is the largest holder of US Treasury bonds.

China Investment Corp, set up in 2007 to invest a chunk of the country's hefty foreign-exchange stockpile, has been trying to diversify since the global financial crisis struck in 2008.

The \$400-billion sovereign wealth fund has been increasing its already substantial holdings in European bonds to get better returns but exact figures on the size of China's euro holdings are hard to find.

Analysts estimate its stockpile is relatively small, with most of it in large countries such as Germany and France.

Shell flowstation shut in Nigeria over oil spills: spokesman



The first oil well in West Africa drilled by Shell in 1956.(Bayelsa State)

LAGOS (AFP) - Anglo-Dutch oil giant Shell has shut one of its onshore flowstations in Nigeria's southern Bayelsa state following several oil leaks on the pipeline, company spokesman Tony Okonedo said Wednesday.

"A number of incidents that involved oil leaks happened yesterday (Tuesday) at the Adibawa flowstation. We had to shut it down to allow for repairs to take place. Repair teams are being mobilised to the site," he told AFP.

"The cause of the leaks is yet unknown. An investigation is going on to determine what really happened," he added.

Okonedo declined to give figure of how much production would be lost from the shut down.

He also declined to comment on the allegation that the leaks happened after some local youths employed to protect pipelines around the area were sacked.

Protesters blocked facilities belonging to oil giant

Shell last month in the same home state of President Goodluck Jonathan.

They were demanding improvements to communities in the area, including new roads and stable electricity supply.

They had accused Shell of breaching a 1999 accord on the provision of electricity and roads for the Oruma, Otusega, Elebele and Imiringi communities in the state.

Shell denied the charge.

Separately, Shell on Wednesday accepted responsibility for two devastating oil spills in the Niger Delta in 2008 and 2009 which lawyers say have destroyed the livelihoods of a fishing community.

A spokesman for Shell's Nigerian operations, the Shell Petroleum Development Company (SPDC), said it would pay compensation but said the process could take several months. Nigeria is Africa's largest oil producer, but the main oil region, the Niger Delta, where Bayelsa state is located, remains deeply impoverished.

YESTERDAY'S Crossword Answer

A	S	I	A	B	C	D	N	C	I	S
P	E	N	M	A	U	I	A	R	M	S
T	A	N	K	A	R	D	S	M	E	A
	E	S	S		P	L	E	A		
A	N	D	Y	S	C	O	A	S	T	A
H	O	E	S		T	O	S	S	U	T
E	T	C		C	R	I	E	S	R	O
A	M	I		A	I	L	S		M	E
D	E	M	A	N	D	S		C	A	S
	A	L	E	E		A	H	S		
V	E	T	O		N	I	N	E	T	I
A	M	E	N		T	O	N	S		A
N	U	D	E		S	U	E	S		M



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Miss Teen Americas 2011, Aruba's Noëlia Khalil gets warm welcome from Minister of Tourism Otmar Oduber



On Sunday evening Minister of Tourism, Oduber was at hand at the airport to welcome back home Noëlia Khalil who just won the maximum title of Miss Teen Americas 2011. Noëlia, herself a student at Colegio Arubano recently competed in El Salvador with 11 other contestants from 11 countries in the American continent. In addition to winning the maximum title, Noëlia also won the prize for the Best Costume and 1st runner up for Miss Teen La Union. The Minister, family and friends of Noëlia met at the airport to welcome Noëlia back and to show her how proud Aruba is of her and of her majestic representation of our island. Her achievement is a very real promotion and honor for Aruba. The Minister thanked our Teen beauty for being such an excellent ambassador of Aruba and for coming back with a crown for us to enjoy.



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Raymond Pimienta enjoyed U2 Live in concert in Philadelphia

Courtesy of SETAR N.V.

SEROE BLANCO -- Ramond Pimienta was the latest winner of the "SETAR on Tour" campaign, and the lucky SETAR client went to Philadelphia to enjoy the tremendous 360° concert by world renowned U2 at the Lincoln Financial Field on July 14.

Next up for "SETAR on Tour" are two tickets to Curacao and "Curacao North Sea Jazz Festival," the weekend of September 2 and 3. Besides airfare, the winner will also get two entrances to the festival, hotel stay and expenses paid.

The "Curacao North Sea Jazz Festival" this year features renown artists and musical groups Danilo Perez Trio, Kassav, Branford Marsalis Quartet, Levi Silvanie, Earth Wind & Fire, Poncho Sanchez and his Latin Jazz Band featuring Terence Blanchard, Sharon Jones & The Dap Kings, Sting, Roberto Fonseca, Chucho Valdés & Afro Cuban, Messengers, Juan Luis Guerra, Dionne Warwick, Rubén Blades, Stevie Wonder and Ronchi Matthew and his All Star Band.



All SETAR clients can participate; just sent an SMS with the word SETAR to number 221 to be eligible to win a fantastic prize with "SETAR on Tour." On Wednesday, August 17, SETAR will pick a winner. The SMS costs only 1 Aruban florin, enter as many times as you like.

Photo shows Raymond Pimeinta receiving his prize from SETAR N.V. marketing representative Juliska Henriquez.

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Eurovision campaign spotlights Azerbaijan 'rights abuses'



Azerbaijan derives his name from the Persian word "Azar" (fire)

BAKU (AFP) - Activists will use the Eurovision Song Contest in Azerbaijan in 2012 to pressure the authorities into improving the human rights situation in the country, a campaigner said on Wednesday.

A group of Azerbaijani rights organisations have launched a campaign titled 'Music of Freedom in a Non-Free Country' that calls on the government to release alleged political prisoners, improve media freedom and lift restrictions on demonstrations before the pop extravaganza in Baku next year.

"Holding such a contest (in Azerbaijan) is a chance to change the situation for the better," one of the campaign's organisers, Anar Mamedli, told AFP.

The campaigners hope that Eurovision -- the most high-profile cultural event in the country since independence from the Soviet Union in 1991 -- will focus international attention on the government's internal policies.

"Azerbaijan should act not only as a host of the song contest but also as a real member of the European family which

respects democratic values," said a statement on the campaign's Facebook page.

The group plans to hold public debates, publish and distribute posters and other materials, and appeal to the head of the organising committee who is Azerbaijan's First Lady, Mehriban Aliyeva.

There was nationwide jubilation when Azerbaijani duo Ell and Nikki won the 2011 Eurovision Song Contest in Dusseldorf, Germany in May, which guaranteed that the 2012 competition would be held in Baku.

The authorities believe that the event will boost the image of the mainly Muslim country, until now mainly known as an energy exporter on Europe's fringe that went through war and political turmoil after the Soviet collapse.

Despite prosecutions of journalists and crackdowns on opposition protests, officials have consistently rejected complaints about a lack of democratic freedoms, pointing instead to political stability and economic development funded by huge oil and gas revenues.

U2 caps biggest concert tour ever

LOS ANGELES (AFP) - Irish rock band U2 has closed out what was described as "the most successful concert tour of all time" over five continents and two years, according to concert promoter Live Nation.

Liz Morentin, a Live Nation spokeswoman, told AFP Tuesday the final numbers are not yet in from the U2 "360 degree Tour" but said "it surpassed \$700 million, beating the Rolling Stones record" from a 2005-2007



tour.

Billboard magazine said the tour hauled in some \$736 million, topping the \$558 million established by Mick Jagger's Stones, and also breaking the record for tour attendance.

The tour began June 30 in Barcelona, days after the death of Michael Jackson, and included 110 events, ending July 30 in Moncton, Canada.

During the tour, U2 performed in the Balkans for the first time since 1997 and played three home town concerts at Dublin's Croke Park, before heading to California to perform in front of 97,000 fans at the Rose Bowl.

A second European leg started in August 2010, featur-

ing U2's first appearances in Russia and Turkey and was followed by events in Australia and New Zealand.

In 2011, U2 played to South Africa for the first time since 1998 with two huge concerts in the World Cup Stadiums of Cape Town and Johannesburg.

The group had three sold-out nights at Estadio Morumbi in Sao Paulo, Brazil and had its biggest single audience of 108,800 at Stadium Azteca in Mexico City on May 14, 2011.

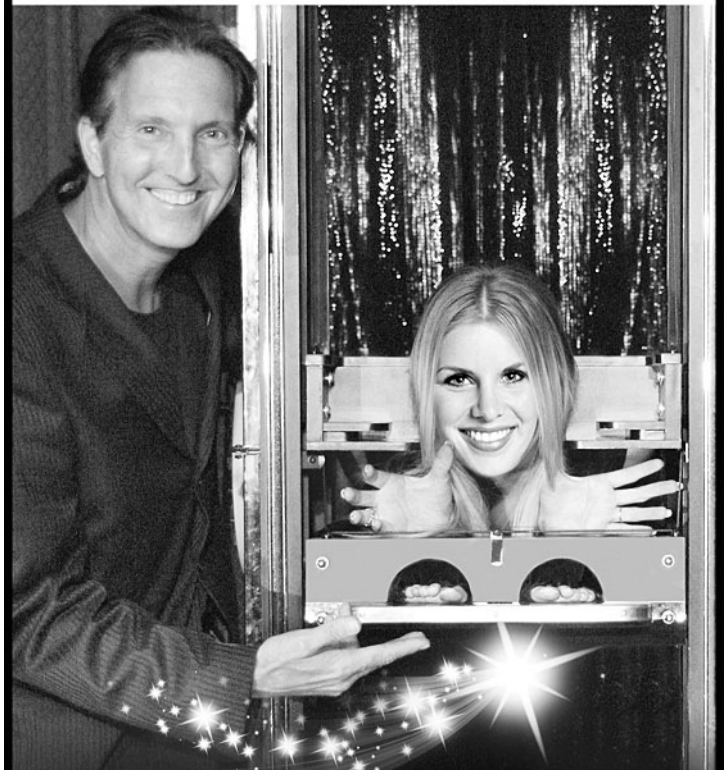
Arthur Fogel, Live Nation's chairman of global music, said: "This tour was a brilliant success on every level and all involved should be extremely proud. U2 once again have set the standard for achievement - perhaps for all time."

Some of the dates had to be rescheduled after frontman Bono had emergency back surgery for temporary "paralysis."

Bono injured himself during tour preparation training in Germany and was treated for severe compression of the sciatic nerve, a serious tear in the ligament and a herniated disc, doctors said.

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Norwegian stores withdraw violent video games after attacks

OSLO (AFP) - Two video games used by far-right extremist Anders Behring Breivik in planning his July 22 killing spree have been withdrawn from a number of stores across Norway. Coop Norge, one of the country's major grocery store chains and its main co-op, said it took the decision "out of respect" for the families of the 77 people slain in the twin attacks. Coop told its locations which carried video games -- 50 of 900 stores -- to remove about 50 products from its aisles, including the games cited by Behring Breivik. Norwegian media reported Platekompaniet, one of the country's leading movie-, video game- and music-selling chains had also pulled some games from its stores. The company did not respond to AFP's request for comment. Some Norwegian gamers blasted the move. In a 1,500-page manifesto posted online, Behring Breivik said he was a fan of "World of Warcraft" and "Call of Duty - Modern Warfare" and that he had played the games while preparing his rampage. He confessed to the attacks, saying he was waging a war on the "islamisation" of western Europe and on multiculturalism.



Cricket: Harbhajan, Yuvraj ruled out of England series



file photo -Yuvraj (left) and Harbhajan were both injured in the heavy second Test defeat

NEW DELHI (AFP) - India on Wednesday suffered a twin blow when Harbhajan Singh and Yuvraj Singh were ruled out of the remaining two Tests of the four-match series against England due to injuries.

Off-spinner Harbhajan and all-rounder Yuvraj, who suffered the injuries during the second Test at Trent Bridge, were replaced with middle-order batsman Virat Kohli and left-arm spinner Pragyan Ojha.

"Yuvraj has fractured his left index finger and Harbhajan has a Grade I abdominal muscle strain," Indian cricket board secretary N. Srinivasan

said in a statement.

"While Yuvraj's injury may take around four weeks to recover, Harbhajan is likely to recover in three weeks' time."

"The selection committee has picked Virat Kohli and Pragyan Ojha as their replacements. Both players will join the Indian team at the earliest."

The third Test starts in Edgbaston on August 10 and the last match at the Oval on August 18.

Harbhajan, struggling on the tour, took just two wickets in the opening two matches while Yuvraj, who scored a half-century in the first innings of the second Test, was struck on the finger while bat-

ting in the second innings.

The double blow came at a time when India were sweating over the fitness of ace paceman Zaheer Khan, who bowled just 13.3 overs in the first innings of the opening Test at Lord's before suffering a hamstring injury.

He was ruled out of the second Test.

Hard-hitting Indian opener Virender Sehwag, recovering from a shoulder injury, also missed the opening two matches but was set to join the squad on Wednesday for the remaining two Tests.

Opener Gautam Gambhir, forced to miss the second Test due to an elbow injury, is expected to return for the third match.

India, trailing 2-0 in the ongoing series following their defeats in the first two Tests, will cede their Test number one status to England if they lose the third match.

Ojha, who played his last Test against New Zealand at home in 2010, has so far bagged 42 wickets in 11 matches while Kohli has scored 76 runs in three Tests.

India will also play a one-off Twenty20 match and five one-day internationals after the Test series.



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Pele at Downing Street for football initiative



Pele poses for pictures outside 10 Downing Street

LONDON (AFP) - It was a case of No 10 at No 10 when Brazil great Pele turned up at the official residence of the British Prime Minister on Wednesday to help promote a youth football programme.

Pele, who wore the No 10 shirt for the bulk of an international career where he was a key member of three Brazil World Cup-winning teams, was at No 10 Downing Street to meet youngsters who are taking part in Street League, a charity which aims to help young people gain qualifications, find jobs and stay away from crime.

The 70-year-old Pele was on hand to watch a kickabout in the Downing Street garden and afterwards he told reporters: "I'm proud to be here, it's fantastic. I'm very honoured."

"In Brazil, we start playing football in the street, so to support the kids here is great."

"Many kids from the street see the game of football and they turn away from the drugs and from the bad scene, which is very important."

Street League's Marco Dejesus, 19, from Tulse Hill, south London, spoke to Pele in the footballer's native Portuguese.

"Meeting him was fantastic, a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity and something I can tell my grandchildren," Dejesus said.

Pele, an ambassador for his former club the New York Cosmos, is in Britain to attend the American side's match with Manchester United at Old Trafford on Friday that will mark Red Devils' midfielder Paul Scholes's testimonial.

Brazil will stage the next World Cup in 2014.

Tennis: Top three advance in San Diego



file photo - Vera Zvonareva

SAN DIEGO (AFP) - Vera Zvonareva led the top three seeds into the third round of the San Diego Open Tuesday with a 6-4, 7-5 win over American Jill Craybas.

Russia's Zvonareva, a two-time Grand Slam finalist, was followed into the third round by second-seeded Andrea Petkovic of Germany and third-seed Agnieszka Radwanska of Poland.

Petkovic, currently ranked 11th but poised to move into the top 10 next week according to WTA projections, defeated American Alexa Glatch 6-3, 6-4.

Radwanska overcame

Britain's Elena Baltacha 6-0, 7-6 (7/4). All three had been given byes to the second round.

Zvonareva arrived in California after claiming a 12th career title in Baku, Azerbaijan, in July.

She said she expected a tough match from Craybas, who won two qualifiers and a first-round match to reach the second-round encounter.

Sixth seed Dominika Cibulkova was forced to withdraw from the event with a left abdominal muscle strain.

The Slovakian had pulled out of her semi-final match at

Stanford on Saturday with the injury, but had hoped to be able to play in San Diego.

In first-round action, Japan's 40-year-old wonder woman Kimiko Date-Krumm beat newlywed Argentinian Gisela Dulko 7-5, 6-0.

Date-Krumm won the event in 1996, not long before she retired and spent 11 years out of the game.

Her victory in just under 90 minutes, with six breaks of the distracted Dulko, got Date-Krumm off to a much more promising start after she lost in qualifying here last year.

Date-Krumm, who took five-time champion Venus Williams to three sets in the second round at Wimbledon in June, said she had some luck in her victory over Dulko, who married Real Madrid footballer Fernando Gago a few weeks ago.

She said her appearance in San Diego has not prompted her to reflect on her title run here a decade and a half earlier.

Italy's Alberta Brianti de-

feated 10th-seeded compatriot Flavia Pennetta 1-6, 6-2, 6-2 while Germany's Wimbledon semi-finalist Sabine Lisicki, the number 12, hammered Greta Arn of Hungary 6-0, 6-2.

Russian 11th seed Maria Kirilenko beat Rebecca Marino 6-3, 6-2 with the Canadian troubled by back pain and needing a medical timeout but saying she will be fine for Toronto next week.

New Zealand's Marina Erakovic upset Russian number 14 Elena Vesnina 6-1, 6-2. Austrian Tamira Paszek, a Wimbledon quarter-finalist, rallied to get past Romanian Simona Halep 0-6, 6-4, 7-5.

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Pistons name Frank as new coach



DETROIT (AFP) - Former New Jersey Nets coach Lawrence Frank was named coach of the NBA's Detroit Pistons on Wednesday, replacing the fired John Kuester after two seasons that did not produce a playoff appearance.

Frank could not speak directly about the players on the Pistons because of the ongoing NBA lockout of players, leaving him speaking in generalities about a season that might not begin as planned in November due to a fight over money.

Looking at a Pistons run of six years in a row in the East-

ern Conference finals, Frank spoke about the team's history and past glory days.

"Six straight years in the conference finals, playoffs in eight of the last 10 seasons and those three titles," he said. "There are only five teams in the NBA with three of those, and this is one of them. That's an honor."

Pistons owner Tom Gores ditched Kuester in June, four days after buying the Pistons, who captured their third NBA title in 2004. Detroit slid to 27-55 two seasons ago and a 30-52 campaign last season was not enough to save Kuester's job.

"Right now, our first job is to get this franchise back on track," Pistons president Joe Dumars said. "We started talking to Lawrence in June, and it is now August - and I'm very confident that he's the right person to get us going in the right direction."

Typically, teams would be involved in free agency at this stage of the season, but club owners locked out players last month after the end of their collective bargaining agreement.

Three IndyCar racers put on probation

INDIANAPOLIS (AFP) -- Britain's Mike Conway, Canada's Alex Tagliani and American Ryan Hunter-Reay are on probation for the remainder of the IndyCar season for multiple instances of initiating avoidable contact.

Series officials announced the penalties on Tuesday, five days before the Indy 200 at Mid-Ohio, the 11th of 17 events in the 2011 campaign. More punishments could be imposed for future violations.

Conway was put on proba-

tion for making contact with Australian Ryan Briscoe at Toronto and Spain's Oriol Servia at Edmonton. Tagliani made contact with Aussie Will Power at Toronto and American Graham Rahal at Edmonton.

MLB Standings

American League					National League				
East	W	L	Pct	GB	East	W	L	Pct	GB
BOSTON	66	41	.617	--	PHILADELPHIA	69	39	.639	--
NY YANKEES	65	42	.607	1.0	ATLANTA	63	47	.573	7.0
TAMPA	56	51	.523	10.0	NY METS	55	54	.505	14.5
TORONTO	55	53	.509	11.5	FLORIDA	54	55	.495	15.5
BALTIMORE	42	63	.400	23.0	WASHINGTON	52	56	.481	17.0
Central	W	L	Pct	GB	Central	W	L	Pct	GB
DETROIT	57	51	.528	--	MILWAUKEE	61	49	.555	--
CLEVELAND	54	52	.509	2.0	ST. LOUIS	57	52	.523	3.5
CHICAGO	52	55	.486	4.5	PITTSBURG	54	53	.505	5.5
MINNESOTA	50	58	.463	7.0	CINCINNATI	53	56	.486	7.5
KANSAS	46	62	.426	11.0	CHICAGO	44	65	.404	16.5
West	W	L	Pct	GB	West	W	L	Pct	GB
TEXAS	61	48	.560	--	HOUSTON	36	73	.330	24.5
LA ANGELES	59	50	.541	2.5	SAN FRANCISCO	61	48	.560	--
OAKLAND	49	60	.450	12.0	ARIZONA	60	49	.550	1.0
SEATTLE	46	62	.426	14.5	COLORADO	51	58	.468	10.0
					LA DODGERS	49	59	.454	11.5
					SAN DIEGO	47	63	.427	14.5

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Van der Sar bids farewell at star-studded Ajax finale



THE HAGUE (AFP) - Manchester United's former Dutch goalkeeper Edwin van der Sar bid farewell to his adoring public on Wednesday in the company of several star internationals in front of 53,000 Ajax fans.

"I want to thank everyone in the stadium ... thanks for your support down through the years," van der Sar told the crowd at the Ajax Arena where he started his career in 1990.

The towering 1.97m goalie selected a "Dream Team" made up notably of

Wayne Rooney, Ryan Giggs, Dirk Kuyt, Edgar Davids, Rio Ferdinand and Dennis Bergkamp, who played for an hour against Dutch giants Ajax.

To a standing ovation from the crowd, Van der Sar left the pitch several minutes before the end of the game which was won 2-1 by the "Dream Team" thanks to goals from Louis Saha and Bergkamp.

"He is maybe the best goalkeeper that Manchester United ever had, but I say maybe because we also had

Peter Schmeichel," said United legend Sir Bobby Charlton.

Earlier in the evening two teams for which van der Sar played - Ajax, with whom he won the Champions League in 1995, and the Dutch national side that were World Cup semi-finalists in 1998 - played each other.

Patrick Kluivert, Marc Overmars, Frank Rijkaard, Frank de Boer and his brother Ronald, represented Ajax while Bergkamp and Giovanni van Bronckhorst were among the players representing the national side.

"Ajax fans thank Edwin van der Sar," a banner draped on the stands read.

Van der Sar won the Champions League with Ajax in 1995 and Manchester United in 2008, four Premier League titles and four Dutch league titles.

The 40-year-old also holds the Premier League record of 1,311 minutes without conceding a goal during the 2010-2011 season and a Dutch record for 130 caps.

He started his career at Ajax (1990-1999) before moving on to Juventus (1999-2001), Fulham (2011-2005) and Manchester United (2005-2011), playing his last official match at Wembley on May 28 during the Champions League final loss to Barcelona.

McIlroy leaning toward return to US PGA Tour



AKRON (AFP) - Reigning US Open champion Rory McIlroy said Wednesday that he is leaning toward returning to the US PGA Tour, saying he prefers warm and sunny US playing conditions to wind-swept European courses.

The 22-year-old from Northern Ireland made his comments on the eve of the World Golf Championships Bridgestone Invitational, his first event on US soil since capturing his first major title in June at Congressional Country Club.

"I'm definitely looking to-

wards coming back and playing a full schedule over here," McIlroy said. "I spoke to a couple of the guys from the PGA Tour today about it and I'm leaning towards taking my card up again definitely."

McIlroy plans on house hunting in Florida after the year's final major tournament, the PGA Championship next week at Atlanta Athletic Club.

"I feel as if I play my best golf over here. I'm very comfortable in this country," McIlroy said.

McIlroy, who saw his British Open title hopes gone with the wind for the second year in a row last month at Royal St. Georges, said that experience with the weather pushed him toward another test of the American circuit, which he said last year involved too much travel for his liking as he played in Europe.

"I just thought about it. I feel as if my game really suits playing courses over here," McIlroy said. "I love Quail Hollow, Memorial, Akron. You play Match Play, Honda, Doral, Masters. You have your favorite events, and most of my favorite events seem to be on this side of the pond."

"And my game suits it over here. I'm very comfortable over here. I would like to give it a go again and obviously last more than one year and really see how it goes."